



REDMOND PLANNING COMMISSION

Sherri Nichols, Chair | Judy East, Vice-Chair
Roy Captain | Aaron Knopf | Vidyanand Rajpathak
Denni Shefrin | Aparna Varadharajan

MINUTES

REDMOND PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING Wednesday, November 10, 2021 - 7:00 p.m.

1. Call to Order & Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chair Nichols.

Commissioners Present: Chair Nichols, Vice-Chair East, Commissioners Captain, Knopf, Raj, Shefrin, and Aparna

Excused Absence: Commissioner Captain

Staff Present: Cathy Beam, Jeff Churchill, Glenn Coil, Kim Dietz, Beckye Frey, David Lee, Sarah Pyle and Beverly Mesa-Zendt, Planning Department

Recording Secretary: Carolyn Garza, LLC

2. Approval of the Agenda

- *MOTION to approve the agenda* by Vice-Chair East. MOTION seconded by Commissioner Knopf. *The MOTION passed unanimously.*

3. Approval of Meeting Summary

- *MOTION to approve* the November 3, 2021 Meeting Summary by Commissioner Shefrin. MOTON seconded by Vice-Chair East. *The MOTION passed unanimously.*

4. Items from the Audience

- *No written comments, no requests to speak.*

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5. Public Hearing – Tree Regulations

Attachments: [Memo](#), [Attachment A – Issues Matrix](#), [Presentation](#)

Staff Contact: [Cathy Beam](#), Principal Planner 425-556-2429

Staff Presentation

Ms. Beam presented a slide overview.

Public Hearing

- *Chair Nichols opened the Public Hearing. There would be two verbal testimonies, and written testimony had also been received.*

Mr. Bob Yoder, 10019 – 169th Avenue Northeast, Redmond, 98052, stated having lived in the area for 36 years. The property of Mr. Yoder is wooded, and many trees have been removed with many replacement trees planted. There are many hard surfaces with tough soil and replacements have been very hard to plant. Permits require replacement trees to be planted by the applicant on the back end; on the front end, money from the applicant could be contributed to a tree fund by donation or requirement. More can be done toward replenishing the canopy by approaching from the front end. There is a better chance for tree survival with essentially the same amount of regulation. The applicant would then not need to deal with the six obstacles mentioned in written testimony also submitted.

Mr. Yoder recommended ideally \$100 for significant trees and \$300 for landmark trees with flexibility. Increasing ratios for developers will allow this approach to planting replacement trees.

Mr. Jeff Simon, 17812 Northeast 26th Street, Redmond, stated having submitted a written comment describing a situation. There are hazardous trees on the property of Mr. Simon that drop limbs unpredictably on the home and walkways. The trees were not of significant or landmark status when the home was built. The trees have grown and have served the purpose but no longer do so, now a hazard. The regulations are preventing Mr. Simon to act and manage the property in a manner to reduce and mitigate risk. The risk should be shared, with the City accepting liability should there be damage to the home or injuries to people.

Mr. Simon stated not understanding the motivation of the city to charge to remove a tree as a preventative, rather than providing motivation to plant more trees to be cycled out on a regular basis. There may be a different way to achieve the desired outcome. The regulation is counter-productive to what the intention is.

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- *Chair Nichols closed the Public Hearing for verbal comment, but written comments would remain open.*

Chairperson Nichols stated that several emails have been received and assured the public that they are all being read. Some were received late today, and as a result were not read before the meeting, but the emails will be considered.

Ms. Beam stated that a summary of verbal comments would be added to the Issues Matrix and asked if a summary of written comments should be added as well, common themes grouped together, and Chairperson Nichols replied yes. Commissioner Varadharajan stated that while a written comment from Master Builders and PSE had been redlined, there were many comments on the side bar and suggested that the comments be captured for the Issues Matrix as opposed to the redlines. The comments appear to indicate what the redlines address.

Vice Chairperson East asked Ms. Beam for clarification that the Issues Matrix would address the written comments of the Public Hearing speakers as well as verbal testimony of the speakers and Ms. Beam replied yes.

Commissioner Varadharajan stated that regarding questions such as whether only native trees, as opposed to hardier species, should be focused on will need to be either mandates or recommendations from a city perspective. Commissioner Varadharajan stated that the idea of Mr. Yoder regarding a tree fund should be explored, for use when there is financial hardship to replace a tree as a community resource.

Vice Chairperson East stated living in a very wooded 50-year-old neighborhood and relating to the comments of Mr. Yoder; thinking outside of the box is needed. Vice Chairperson East stated also having the same neighborhood issue as Mr. Simon; trees were planted directly next to houses when built and are creating problems at this point in growth. Vice Chairperson East stated appreciation for the written comments submitted.

Commissioner Shefrin stated that the health of trees can become compromised over time if too close together or if excessive shade is produced inhibiting growth below; there needs to be a significant level of reasonableness when discussing 1:1 tree replacement. Commissioner Shefrin asked what entity is assessing and if the City has the resources to effectively accomplish this, and if the idea of canopy banking could occur similar to wetland banking. Not all properties can sustain more vegetation, and natural light needs to be considered. Shrubs also provide ecological benefit and asked if shrubs have been examined along with tree replacement. Mr. Simon related in written comment about challenges in efforts to obtain permits.

Commissioner Knopf stated that while on the Parks and Trails Commission, the subject of tree banking had been addressed; the opportunity given to developers should be afforded to citizens. Regarding a comment of Mr. Simon about safety, the city had taken

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action to remove cottonwood trees in Idylwood Park and replace with less hazardous trees and that private citizens should have the same option.

Commissioner Varadharajan stated that regarding shrubs, all shrubs and trees have different sequestration properties, not a 1:1 correlation, and if tall shrubs are to be considered, the issue is not only about green landscape, but the amount of cooling affect and sequestration will need to be identified.

Chairperson Nichols stated that in Master Builder comments, *40% required canopy* does not educate why or what the city is attempting to accomplish, making decisions regarding trade-offs more difficult. The 40% is only a number.

Commissioner Varadharajan stated agreement with Chairperson Nichols and stated that a heat mapping study can tell where certain plantings are needed more than other areas.

Vice Chairperson East stated that tree regulation is only one tool to achieve the 40% canopy requirement and that the thread of reasoning needs to be understood.

Chairperson Nichols stated that all written testimony would be read and the Commissioners ready for the Issues Matrix at the December 1, 2021 meeting.

6. Study Session - Redmond Zoning Code ReWrite Phase 1 and Zoning Code Amendments 2020-2021

Attachments: [Memo](#), [Attachment A – Issues Matrix](#), [Attachment B – DRAFT Planning Commission Report](#), [Attachment C – Planning Commission's Recommended Refinements to Technical Committee's Recommendations](#)

Staff Contact:	Kimberly Dietz , Principal Planner	425-556-2415
	Cameron Zapata , Senior Planner	425-556-2411
	Niomi Montes de Oca , Senior Planner	425-556-2499
	Andrea Kares , Planner	425-556-2480
	Scott Reynolds , Planner	425-556-2409
	Sarah Pyle , Planning Manager	425-556-2426
	David Lee , Planning Manager	425-556-2462

Ms. Dietz stated there is one issue remaining open in the Issues Matrix regarding LEED and Green building. Commissioner Varadharajan has worked with staff to identify priorities on behalf of the Commission.

Mr. Lee stated that edits include a decarbonization checklist for developers and an expansion of the LEED Platinum program. As a result, LEED Gold and LEED Silver will be removed. A Green Building certification definition will be added.

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Ms. Pyle stated that staff will be working with the City Attorney on language for the package to ensure that new permanent regulations are made available for any application submitted near the adoption. There are recent vesting language changes in Washington State.

Chairperson Nichols asked Commissioner Varadharajan if the open issue could be closed. Commissioner Varadharajan replied yes and stated that Ms. Pyle and Ms. Dietz have been excellent to work with, and appreciating the time and energy given.

- **MOTION to recommend** the Redmond Zoning Code Rewrite Phase 1 and Zoning Code Amendments 2020-2021 as presented by Commissioner Knopf. MOTION seconded by Commissioner Varadharajan. *The MOTION passed unanimously.*
- **MOTION to approve** the draft report by Commissioner Varadharajan. MOTION seconded by Commissioner Knopf. *The MOTION passed unanimously.*

Commissioner Nichols thanked staff for hard work on the items.

7. Redmond 2050 - Monthly Update

Attachments: [Memo](#), [Presentation](#)

Staff Contact: [Jeff Churchill](#), Planning Manager 425-556-2492

Mr. Churchill reported that on November 1, 2021, Fehr & Peers, Travel Demand Modeling Consultants, met with city staff regarding future travel conditions. Questions included how vehicle miles of travel will change, the evolution of teleworking, trips made for delivery of goods and services, and willingness to share close public spaces in transit. Mr. Churchill asked if the Commission would like to discuss these in a future meeting and the Commission replied yes.

Commissioner Varadharajan asked if peak loads for energy and internet usages will be factored later. Mr. Churchill replied that travel patterns are indications of changes in lifestyles, and that the point was understood that how people behave will not only affect transportation.

Mr. Churchill continued with preliminary findings from public surveys regarding the Overlake area.

Mr. Churchill reported that Redmond has been awarded grants from the Department of Commerce to support Housing Action Plan implementation and Redmond 2050 environmental work. He also reported that staff are developing first drafts of the Housing, Economic Vitality, and Transportation Elements of the Comprehensive Plan.

Commissioner Knopf asked about concerns reported in surveys regarding blocking views and shadows; the only way to achieve the density needed in Overlake will be to

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allow buildings to build higher. Mr. Churchill replied that specific views, public view corridors, are identified in the zoning code currently and will need to be addressed as a community.

8. Staff & Commissioner Updates

- *Updates and discussion only. No action will be taken at this time.*

Mr. Coil stated that the next meeting will be on December 1, 2021 with a study session regarding Tree Regulations and a Public Hearing on House Bill 1220. The December 15, 2021 meeting will include Tree Regulations report approval and a potential rollover Public Hearing for House Bill 1220. The January 12, 2022 meeting will include amendments and report approval for House Bill 1220. The January 26, 2022 meeting will include Redmond 2050 and additional topics are possible.

Mr. Churchill stated that more input is needed to the community questionnaire on Overlake and asked everyone to complete the survey at www.Redmond.gov/Redmond2050 and to share with friends and neighbors. The survey will be open through Thanksgiving weekend and will take approximately 5-10 minutes.

Commissioner Knopf described the situations that have led to the intent of the tree canopy, The Parks and Trail Commission at the time was attempting to make retention of trees a priority and while there are many concerns surfacing now, the idea of a tree canopy was the tool available at the time.

9. Adjourn - 8:21pm

- *MOTION to adjourn* by Vice -Chair East. MOTION seconded by Commissioner Knopf. *The MOTION passed unanimously.*

Minutes approved on:

December 1, 2021

Planning Commission Chair

DocuSigned by:

Sherri Nichols

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